

NOVA

Avon Fire Brigade Journal



Winter 1989

NOVA

Avon Fire Brigade

EDITORIAL

MAY I wish all Nova readers a very happy and safe Christmas and a New Year where all your wishes come true and your resolutions last longer than one day.

This year has been punctuated by many events. Lyn Lloyd's Queen's Gallantry Medal and John Gamlins's Queen's Commendation recognised the brave acts carried out by all the firefighters at the Shell UK fire.

We said goodbye to Frank Wilton who retired after 35 years service and welcomed Pat Aris as our new Chief Officer.

As we enter a new decade exciting times await us, I just hope someone tells me about them so they can be chronicled in Nova.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

IAN JEFFERIES, *Editor.*



FRONT COVER PHOTO:
HAWKES GYM, ROMAN ROAD,
BRISTOL.

The opinions expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors and publishers and may not represent the official opinion of the Fire Brigade.

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PORTISHEAD PERAMBULATE

FOREWORD

By PAT ARIS, Chief Fire Officer

IT gives me great pleasure to write these few lines as your new Chief Officer.

I have lived in Avon now for nearly ten years and realise how fortunate we are in the quality of life that we enjoy. In these ten years there have been many good things to appreciate. I very much value the friendship and comradeship which I have been invited to share in the Brigade.

Avon Fire Brigade provides a first class caring service to the population of this County and this is highlighted on the many occasions when the enthusiasm and courage of so many of our members is brought to the fore.

I have always been proud to be a fireman, and I am unhappy that national judgements on the Fire Service might in any way affect the standard of service and care which we are able to provide to those in this County.

Our job is to respond to the needs of Avon and to ensure that each response is second to none. I will give you my wholehearted support in trying to make us first, and not just alphabetically!

To all of you, and your loved ones, I wish a happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.

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Thanks folks, you're doing a great job!

FOREWORD

By RICHARD BRIMMELL, Divisional Commander, 'F' Division

HAVING been given the opportunity to 'Foreword' this Magazine, I would like to take advantage of this situation by talking about statistics. Not a very exciting subject but nevertheless an essential one. Unless we take notice of the most likely causes and locations of fires, we cannot advise the public at large on how to avoid the consequences.

Every Spring the Home Office publishes fire statistics for the whole of the United Kingdom. These statistics take time to collect and process, so the latest are for 1987. Some of the main figures and trends are given here for your interest.

Firstly, a summary of where fires mainly happen. The grand total of fires recorded that year was 354,000 (the drop from the 387,300 recorded in 1986 was mainly due to fewer grass fires): 26% (92,800) were in refuse and derelict vehicles; 18% (63,200) were in dwellings — people's homes — and another 14% (48,600) were chimney fires; fires in road vehicles continued their long-term rapid increase and now amount to 14% (49,700) of all fires after having more than doubled in a ten year period which saw the number of vehicles increase by only 25% and the number of vehicle miles increase by a mere 40%; as a result of a relatively wet summer the number of fires in grass, crops and woods dropped substantially to 9% (33,300) — a third of the total recorded in dry 1984; the remaining 9% (966,400) was split between industry, commerce, clubs etc.

Fires in people's homes accounted for 61% (63,200) of all fires in buildings, a figure hardly changed from the previous year. The main cause of fires in people's homes included: 40% due to the unintentional misuse of equipment and appliances, a category which includes most fires in the kitchen; 12% were due to deliberate or possibly deliberate ignition; faults in appliances caused 11%; careless handling of fire and hot substances — mainly smokers' materials — caused a further 11%.

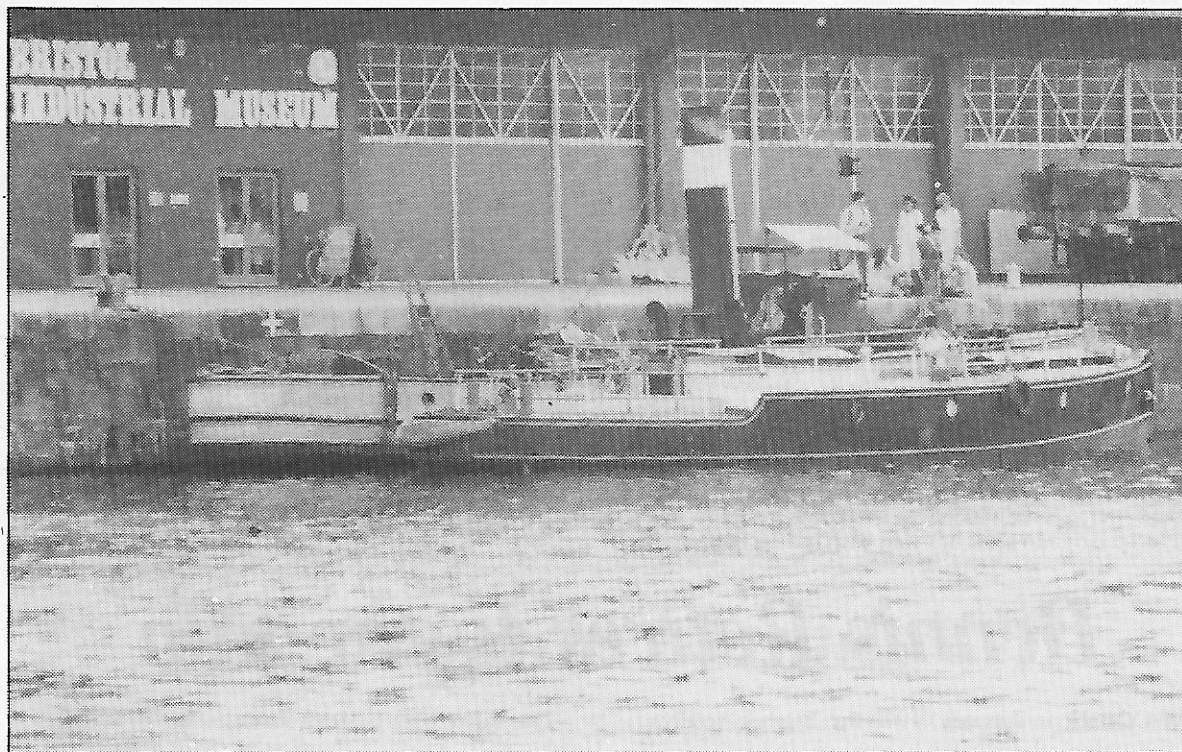
The main cause of fires in other buildings (40,900) split between industry, commerce, hotels, clubs etc) included: 27% due to deliberate or possibly deliberate ignition; 13% to faults in appliances; 10% to the careless handling of fire and hot substances, and 12% to the unintentional misuse of equipment and appliances.

929 people lost their lives in 1987; 710 of them died in their own or other people's homes; 92 in other buildings and 127 outdoors. Smoke was the main killer, claiming 67% of those whose cause of death was recorded; only 31% died of burns and 1% from other injuries. Non-fatal casualties totalled 12,567.

The main cause of fire deaths in people's homes were: 39% were due to careless handling of smokers' materials; 21% were due to heaters; 9% were due to cooking appliances; 7% were due to children playing with fire.

I hope you will be able to use these facts when you give advice to your friends and the public at large. Have a happy Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

'PYRONAUT' Returns Home



'PYRONAUT' moored beside MAYFLOWER in Bristol Docks

BRISTOL'S fireboat 'PYRONAUT', retired in the 70's, has at last returned home. It is Bristol Industrial Museum's latest acquisition.

After its last day in service, the boat, which at that time was the longest serving appliance in the Brigade, lay in the City Dock, moored behind the 'Nova Scotia' public house and was used by the dock's divers. Various alterations were made to the craft such as moving the engines forward and moving the helm and steering gear to the after deck. It lay in rather a sorry state as a typical working boat for many years until it was sold off into private hands whereupon restoration work was started to return it to its former glory. For some time it was on the quayside near the docks canteen at Avonmouth while the new owner set about the work which included the fitting of stabilisers to the hull, which should help to prevent the dreadful roll which was so characteristic as soon as a few waves were encountered. The restoration was well under way when the owner started to "run out of steam" and it was at this point that Andy King, Curator of the Industrial Museum, started to take an interest.

After a large sum of money had been raised, 'PYRONAUT' finally came into their possession and with the steam tug "MAYFLOWER" with a full head of steam, it was brought from Avonmouth to its new berth outside the Museum in the City Dock.

There is still a lot of work to be done and Andy King would be only too pleased to receive help from serving or retired members of the Brigade especially if they have carpentry or mechanical skills such as boiler-making, pipe-fitting, or welding and of course painters are always required.

The Museum are also after any photographic material of the boat. If any of our readers have pictures of the boat at work, on drill, or attending fires, then just take them along when you volunteer to work!

Lord Mayor's Visit

THE Lord Mayor of Bristol, Councillor Mrs. Kathleen Mountstephen at her request paid a visit to Fire Brigade Headquarters in September. The Lord Mayor's visit has become something of a tradition usually at the end of their term of office, but this time Mrs. Mountstephen wanted to visit before Chief Officer Wilton retired.

Fire Calls during the morning forced a change in the programme and a visit into Fire Control preceded the customary firefighting and rescue demonstration. White Watch performed the various exercises to the usual high standard now expected and afterwards the Lord Mayor took full advantage of the Chief Officer's invitation to operate the turntable ladder from its cage.

The Chairman of the County Council, Mrs. Ray Roseworn and Councillor Rosalie Walker, joined the Chief Officer and guests for dinner and, I'm sure, left the Brigade after her visit with lasting memories.



The Lord Mayor with Tony Stonehouse at the controls.

Dennis Retires to the Sun

WAY back in January, 1988 the Brigade received information of a scheme to send old but serviceable fire engines to Africa. To that date appliances had been sent to Ghana, Ethiopia, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Zambia, Kenya and Sudan, and several more were in the pipeline.

The Public Protection Committee met in February 1988 and kindly authorised the release of a surplus Brigade appliance once identified. It was decided that a Dennis Water Tender which had given many years service at Bath and was currently being used as the Brigade Display Unit, would be most suitable because of its mechanical simplicity and overall condition.

When its time for retirement arrived the appliance was de-commissioned by Brigade Workshops and reconverted back to operational use. It then went to B6 Speedwell where Gordon Feaver spent many hours painting and generally tidying up the machine.

The Brigade was informed the appliance was allocated to Tanzania and was intended for use with Tanzania Harbour Authority at Dar Es Salaam.

The Harbour Authority agreed to pay the shipping costs and a local shipping agent at Avonmouth was commissioned to carry out the business.

The fire engine remains at Brigade Headquarters awaiting shipping as there have been long delays in the arrangements between the agents and the Harbour Authority, but hopefully it will not be long before it starts its journey to Dar Es Salaam where I am sure it will give many more years of service.



Dennis ready to go but still waiting for a ticket

Control Staff to the Rescue

IT was one of those rare occasions where sufficient staff on duty in Brigade Control allowed a couple of them to go to a Station to give a lecture.

David Arthur and Louise Marks (known as Lou two) had just started their talk to members of Blue Watch at B6 when they were interrupted by a fire call to a high-rise block of flats in Speedwell, Bristol. As it happened to be just around the corner, they decided to attend to observe, but finished up doing a lot more.

When the appliance arrived the Officer in Charge discovered a densely smokellogged flat on the fourth floor. The two crews were committed to charging the dry riser and a B.A. team entered the dwelling to search and tackle the fire. The Officer in Charge called for the lounge to be vented from the balcony, which needed a ladder to be pitched and Dave was able to give the two pump operators a hand to pitch the 135 ladder. Meanwhile Louise fetched a resuscitator from the appliance and eventually finished up footing the ladder. An elderly lady was found in the flat and despite desperate attempts at resuscitation she failed to respond.

Dave, of course has seen it before as he was a retained firefighter at C6 Chew Magna. Louise, well, she trained alongside recruit firefighters therefore knowing what to do and where to go. Our two intrepid Control staff stayed until the end of the proceedings and gained valuable insight of what happens at the scene of a working job.

The Brigade Sounds Off

THERE is a small and very dedicated group of people in our Brigade but few know of the great work they do to promote the organisation.

They are the men and women members of the Brigade's Military Band.

All through the spring and summer the Band has completed a very successful series of engagements, including their 22nd annual appearance at the North Somerset Agricultural Show held each year at Ashton Court during the Spring Bank Holiday. Summer park concerts opened on August Bank Holiday in grand style at Greenwich Park, London. Concerts at Bath, Chippenham and Bristol Parks quickly followed.

The Band is very versatile as the winter programme demonstrates with such diverse engagements as the British Legion Festival of Remembrance at the Colston Hall and the service at the Cenotaph to the annual dinner of the Bristol Sporting Club at the Grand Hotel.

Versatility has been achieved by the tireless work of the Director of Music, Percy Mann BA(Mis)., ARCM., FCV., NABBC., ably supported by Bandmaster Terry Fleming and one of the finest libraries of military band music in the country. This library is growing all the time, even with pieces from modern shows such as 'Phantom of the Opera' and 'Les Miserables'. Another source is the band's own compositions; the piece 'RED WATCH' composed by Percy Mann always concludes each programme.

To keep this fresh and dynamic approach moving, the band is always on the lookout for enthusiastic and competent musicians to fill any vacancies which occur from time to time. If you are interested all you need to do is contact the Secretary, Mr. Jim Churchill on **Bristol 616983** or the HQ Liaison Officer, Mr. Barry Hook.

JIM CHURCHILL, (Hon. Band Secretary).

★ PIZZA MAESTROS ★



THE culinary skills of Ian Simpson and Bob Strong of Red Watch AI are well known throughout the brigade. When coupled with the delicate artistry of Clare McCarthy they became Pizza Maestros in a competition organised by Pizza Hut.

The idea was to design a Pizza which was marked on artistic design, ingredient content and taste. Competing against catering students from Brunel College their opponents looked very competent. Just before the competition started Pizza Hut played their ace card and put a time limit of five minutes to complete the design on a base already prepared.

As soon as the whistle blew to start Brunel with great enthusiasm spread with spatulas sauces over their base as a foundation for the topping.

Ian and Bob had a glass of wine, Clare looked on.

Brunel selected the ingredients for their design, cut to length and shaded for colour.

Bob and Ian had another glass of wine Clare looked on.

Brunel started laying the ingredients onto the base.

Ian and Bob wanted a glass of wine, Clare kicked them into action.

Years of cooking expertise was so evident as Ian poured the sauces onto the base and Bob with a single deft sweep of his hand spread an even layer over the base, at the same time removing excess onto the floor. Clare stepped forward and created the main part of the picture, by which time the two teams were equal in progress. Bob and Ian working with such precision, synchronised swimmers would be envious, completed the design of a firefighters helmet on a background of flames from a pepper plantation. Bob's finishing touch of a brigade badge formed in tomato was put in position by a lob from three feet. The pizza was cooked.

After careful judging and another glass of wine our team was declared the winner and Brunel a close second.

Clare, Bob and Ian immediately donated their prize money of £75 to charity and had another slurp.

ED.

NOVA

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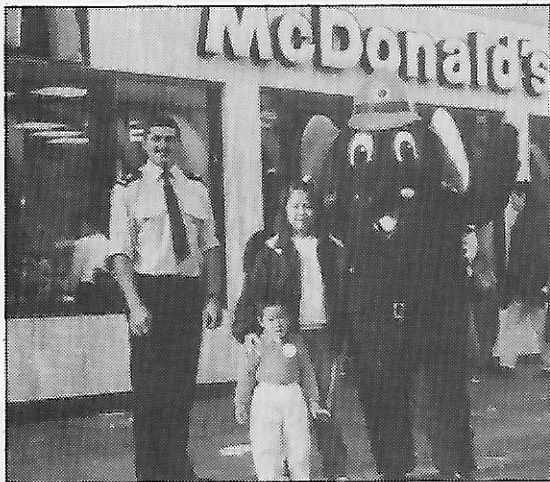
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"Learn Not To Burn"

AT last I can reveal the reason for clouds of steam coming from one corner of Bristol's F.P. office. It was the production team sweating away producing two new Brigade publications titled "LEARN NOT TO BURN", one aimed at fire safety training at work, the other fire safety at home.

At the beginning of this year's National Fire Safety Week, the books, which are sponsored by Chubb Fire, were launched along with the Brigade's new display caravan.



Elephant and friend with young competitors at Bath.

The caravan, donated by Davis Caravans of the Divan Group, has been refurbished by the Brigade, repainted and looks splendid in its new livery. Much of the equipment including a video player has been supplied by Avon Fire Liaison Panel and will be available for fire safety promotions. Its first outing was during Fire Safety Week when it was taken around the county as part of a children's fire safety competition in conjunction with McDonalds Restaurants and First Alert home smoke detectors.



A quick check for spelling mistakes

Cheshire Fire Brigade Triathlon

IT may have been the prospect of swimming 1 mile, running 5 miles and cycling 24 miles, that the only entrants for the Cheshire Fire Brigade Triathlon from Avon were Danny Millard, B7, and myself.

Danny and I, along with our support crew (my wife Christine), arrived at Chester Fire Station on the Friday evening, where the personnel at the station were extremely helpful, not only accommodating us for the night but about 60 others as well.

Early Saturday morning a quick reconnoitre of the cycle course showed an additional hazard of sixteen speed ramps on a route which had to be completed three times. I decided to try and bunny hop over these at speed rather than slow down and ride up and over.

After our inspection of the course, we booked in at the race control and then took our cycles to the start of the section, set them up and left our cycle clothes.

Our running kit was placed in numbered bags and taken to the end of the swimming section.

At 1300 hours there was a mass start with 165 competitors diving into the River Dee. As we raced downstream the water was so murky you could not see the swimmer in front of you and I lost contact with Danny. I emerged from the swim in front of him and it stayed that way during the uneventful run but I lost a lot of time changing into running kit.

At the cycle collection point Danny caught up while I was going through another slow change and he rode out in front of me. I managed to pass him on the road and went on to finish 42nd with a time of 2 hours, 54 seconds. Danny, who had quick changeovers because he kept the same shorts for all three events, something I will do next time, finished in 2 hours, 5 minutes, 50 seconds with 56th place. The winning time was 1 hour, 43 minutes, 56 seconds by L. Garrod of Lancashire. Another entry of note was Tony Parry, who served at A7 Yate, later at the Brigade Training Department and now Chief Officer of Greater Manchester; he was placed 144th.

I am now looking forward to next year's event and hope more people from the Brigade will join me in this great event.

**RON STINCHCOMBE,
B4 Brislington.**

GOLDEN ANNIVE

IN July B1 celebrated 50 golden years of service, the Station that is, not the members of White Watch, who were on duty the day of the celebration.

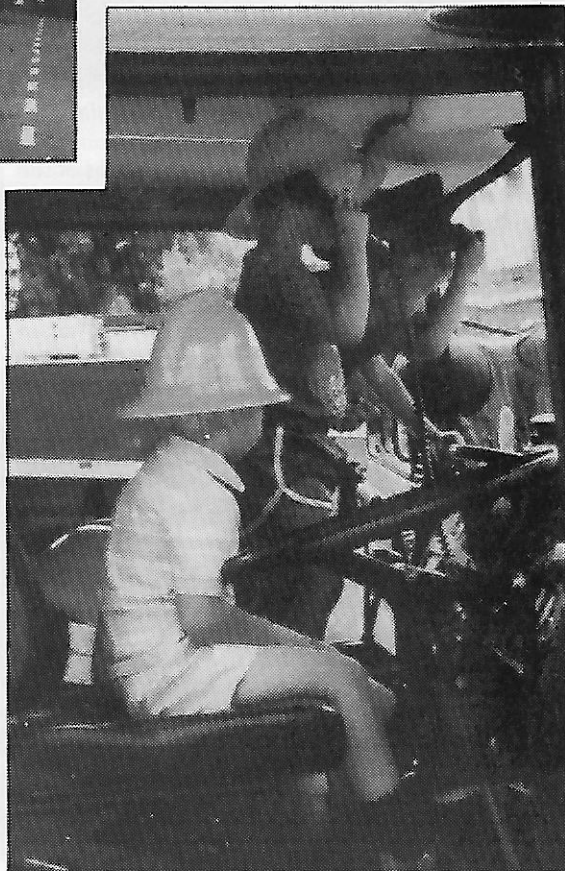
The open day started at 10 o'clock and very quickly the Station was full of the public, viewing the static display of fire appliances and historical publications put together by members of the Station. Weeks of preparation preceded the day and a great deal of work was done, not only by the Station personnel, but by retired members as well. Special thanks should go to John Saunders who did so much research which made the historical display so successful.

A special feature in the afternoon was a demonstration of firefighting and rescue techniques which lasted nearly two hours. The highlight of which was an escape ladder drill performed by the four Watch Station Officers showing in slow motion how it should be done.

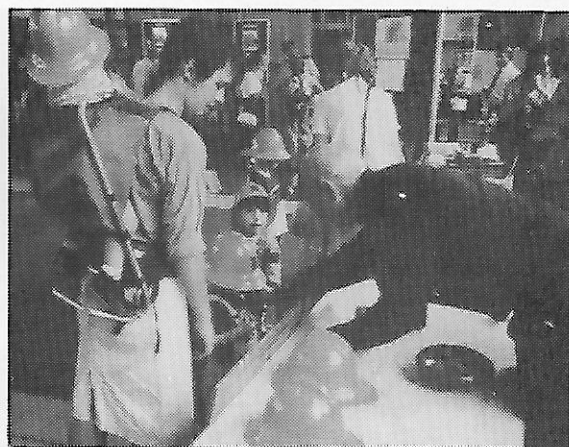
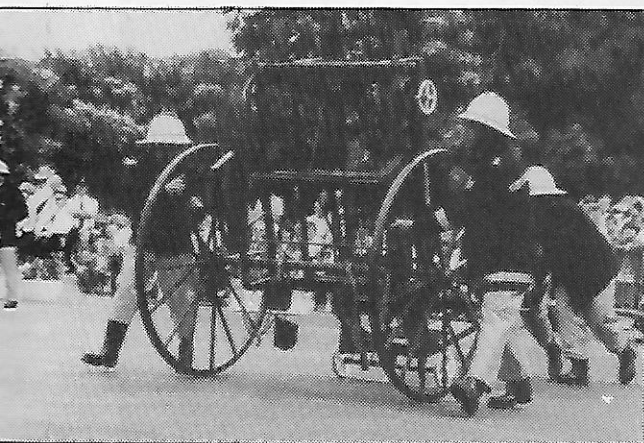
The open day was a resounding success enjoyed by thousands.



Hands on experience for the younger visitors



RSARY AT BATH



Inside stalls meeting the early onslaught as the day begins.



RETIREMENTS

Of course we all know Mr. Frank Wilton has retired so he appears on most of these pictures.



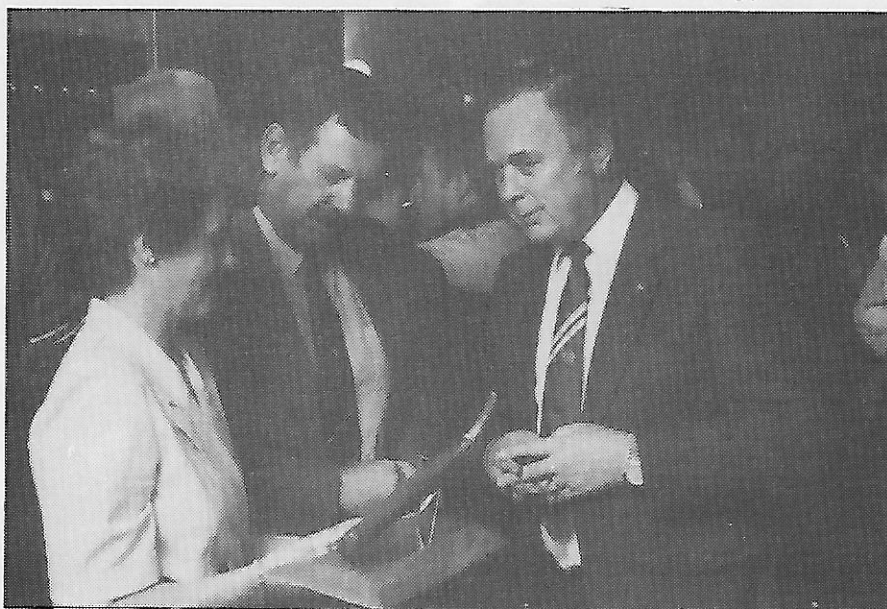
DICK BARTON

Dick Barton at home chained to his machine.



GRAHAM JOHNSON

Graham Johnson tries not to laugh when receiving his gift.



BRIAN AND JEAN BOWDEN

Brian and Jean Bowden admiring their memento with Mr. Frank Wilton.



GLYN JONES

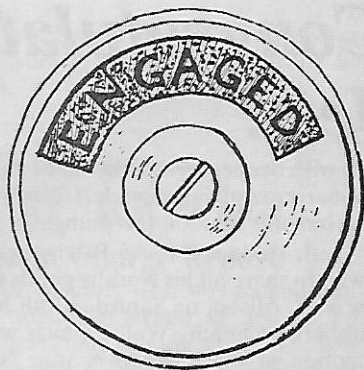
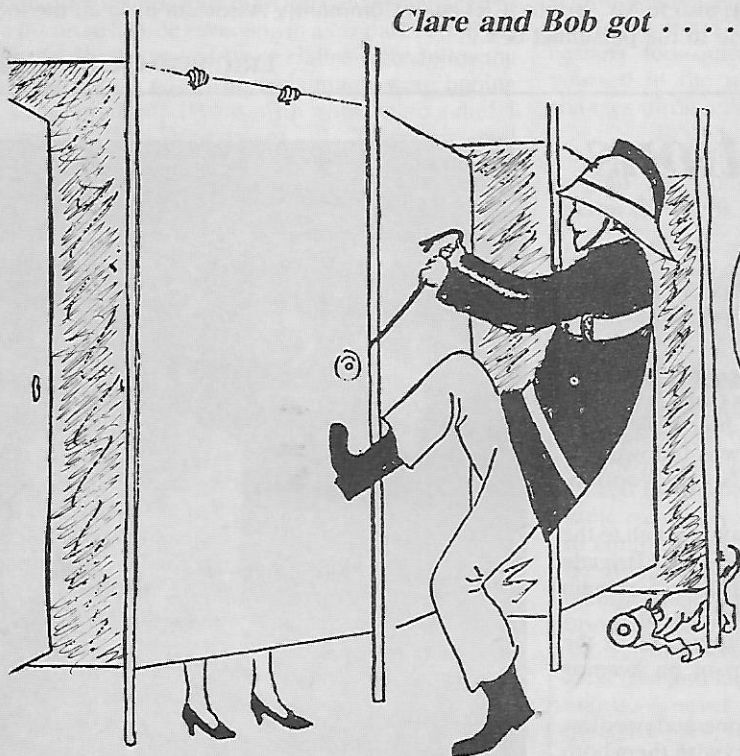
Glyn Jones receiving his gift from Mr. Wilton. Glyn got lost trying to find Headquarters.



REG HOLMES

Reg Holmes says farewell surrounded by his old watch.

*Oh, Dear! What can the matter be?
Clare and Bob got*



Congratulations!

Big Band 60's Night at Clevedon

ON the evening of Friday, April 14th, the Community Centre at Clevedon shook to the sounds of the Avon Youth Band. Over 250 people packed the Hall to listen and dance the night away to the sounds of the 1970's. All staged by an ex-colleague of C2, Bob Green.

Bob approached the Station back in February and suggested a way of raising money for the Benevolent Fund. He had seen the Avon Youth Band "in concert" and thought of the Big Band 60's night, so with the help of C2 Bob set about to arrange the evening. He booked the band, printed tickets, arranged the venue. All the lads on the station had to do was sell the tickets!! As things progressed Fm. K. Eaton joined Bob to arrange the event. Bob also arranged for the Star Dust Road Show to perform on the evening after the Big Band.

To help sell tickets, it was suggested to make the ticket number an entry into a draw. For this a colour T.V. was donated by one of the men on C2, Fm. Steve Sulley, for which we are very grateful. Thanks, Steve. Meanwhile, Bob had been in contact with this many business associates and acquired a number of prizes for a raffle, one prize in particular, a holiday to the value of over £200!

On the afternoon of the event several of the lads went to the Community Centre and helped to set up the tables and decorate the Hall. Three hours hard work, thanks to Ken(ba), Steve, John, Brian, Lee, Keith and Bob and Pauline.

The evening started with the Star Dust Road Show. They played for about an hour, then the Big Band came on. Were those tunes really that old?!

During the evening three presentations were made by the Bed Race Committee to three local groups from the 1966 Bed Race. Station Officer Peter Till presented three main cheques for £100 to the Y.M.C.A. and two local Guide and Brownie packs.

Dancing returned, well into the night, or should it be early morning?

After all the totting up was done, bills paid, I'm happy to say that a donation of £500 was made to the Benevolent, so on behalf of the Fund, I would like to say, Thanks very much to Bob and Pauline for the excellent efforts in staging the night; also to Mr. Bright, Clevedon Community Association, to all the local businesses of the town and of course to the personnel of C2.

ERIC PIMM, C2 Clevedon.

Congratulations Jeff?

IT is with deepest sympathy that I have to announce the marriage of Fireman Jeff Rogers! (We warned him, but still he took the plunge!).

Jeff, stationed at A5 Patchway, Green Watch, vowed to share all his worldly goods (joke?) with his new wife, Alison, on Saturday 10th June, 1989 at St. Cuthbert's Church, Wells, which was followed by reception at the Crossways Inn, North Wootton. (Fire that speech writer).

Food and drink abounded all day — much to the delight of some members of the Brigade 'Rent-a-guest' team, who shall of course remain nameless, Geoff, John N, Merv, Bob, John R . . . and the proceedings were brought to a close at the Anchor Hotel, Filton, in the form of an evening party.

A good time was had by everyone and needless to say all Jeff's friends and colleagues wish them both all the best for their future together.

Keep up the mortgage repayments, Jeff.

P. J. COOMBES





MOTORING

Roll Over Controversy

IF I had bought my Suzuki jeep as an investment then I would have been bitterly disappointed because after a couple of months ownership, the Consumer Association announced under banner headlines that Suzuki jeeps fall over for seemingly no apparent reason and they should be immediately taken off the road. The bottom fell out of the secondhand Suzuki market.

I could not understand such a statement as I had driven several thousand miles on the road with never a hint of unstable handling and off road the only problem seemed to be lack of torque from the engine when negotiating thick mud. Curiosity compelled me to investigate further.

Reports to the Consumer Association indicated that several people rolled their SJ models while in country lanes, swerving to miss oncoming vehicles on or close to bends, one individual even managed to turn his on to its side reversing in a car park. I had the distinct feeling some of these claims were following the rusty Lancia path where claimants were hoping for compensation. It was with some relief I discovered the Department of Transport had commissioned the Vehicle Safety Division of the Transport and Road Research Laboratory to conduct independent tests.

The Transport and Road Research Laboratory (TRRL) tested sixteen vehicles which included a medium sized car and its estate variant. The remainder were four wheel drive multi-purpose vehicles. Of the remaining fourteen, six were Suzuki, early SJ series and later SJ models with wider track.

A 28 page report duly followed, somewhat delayed because the test was temporarily suspended after a Dahatsu four trak overturned. The criterion used to judge whether a vehicle would overturn in any test was when both front and rear wheels on one side of the vehicle lifted from the ground. Once this occurs the only difference between an actual overturn and front and rear wheel lift, is successful corrective action by the driver.

In one test which simulated swerving around an obstruction, the Dahatsu four trak unladen was classed as having overturned in both throttle on and throttle off condition. When laden the four trak did overturn when the throttle was on and two older

Suzuki SJ and one new Suzuki SJ were classed as overturned. Results from this test were unpredicable. Some vehicles lifted wheels in one part of the manoeuvre and others in a different part. Those that lifted two wheels in the exit lane of the manoeuvre were particularly difficult to control and that driver influence was the greatest factor in this manoeuvre.

What does all this prove, you may ask. Well, if you are thinking of buying a multi-purpose vehicle, these tests indicate the Isuzu Trooper is at least likely to overturn while changing direction on dry tarmac; the Lada Niva came a close second. If you are driving one of the Brigade Land Rovers you should be aware of the vehicle's limitations in terms of acceleration speed, braking and cornering. A high centre of gravity multi-purpose vehicle handles differently from an ordinary saloon car just as an ordinary saloon handles differently from a high performance sports car. Read the road well ahead and don't enter corners too quickly and you should never find yourself in the position of having to make rapid changes of direction.

The secondhand Suzuki market has now picked up and the Consumer Association want to ban microwave ovens.

ED.

NOVEL REPORT

Officer in Charge Report

GAIN access for occupier who was locked out. Occupier was originally locked in and so he climbed out of downstairs window of room he was locked in and became locked out. A lady in the same room stayed locked in as she was unwilling to climb out of the window and become locked out. Fm. Nash gained access by sliding slowly and painfully head first down the inside of a very small upstairs window. He unlocked the front door and allowed the occupier access to the room he was locked in and later became locked out. Moral of above — never lock yourself in a room with a defective lock, for whatever reason!!

A2 are now waiting for a S.S.C. involving a barrel of bricks.

ED.

WOMEN'S PAGE

A Women's Eye-View of Christmas

THE festive season is here again and already I have completed much of the work for that time we all love but dread, Christmas Day.

For weeks before your mind is constantly alert to ideas for gifts which are going to be "Terrific" and not "Oh, just what I wanted". These presents are all carefully wrapped and placed beneath the tree and the children instructed not to shake, squeeze, poke of generally investigate the contents.

Did I mention "tree"? Of course, that is another formidable task. I have tried many different methods of carrying them, but I like my trees big and that poses a problem, one which I thought I solved when I pushed it down through the car's open sunshine roof but when I got home and tried to get it out!! Decorating the tree is easy as I leave it to the children as I spend my time trying to get the fairy lights to work.

The last minute gift shopping done, enough food in the house to survive a nuclear holocaust and sufficient drink to preserve a herd of mammoths, Christmas Eve arrives and the work begins preparing all the food for the next day. As I lay in bed totally exhausted, desperately trying to go to sleep as I know tomorrow will be a long day, I remember I haven't bought any cranberry sauce.

It is usually five o'clock when I get up to turn on the oven to start cooking the turkey. Of course I know there are automatic timers but the year it did not

switch on we had our dinner at four o'clock in the afternoon. I creep back to bed hoping not to wake the children only to find them wide awake discovering the contents of their Christmas stockings. My husband is fast asleep. After a couple of hours the whole family get up and I prepare breakfast, we open our presents but my day is spent dashing from the kitchen to the living room to be with my children or friends who call to visit.

With all my family around the table I serve dinner after which my husband retires to his chair to sleep and with the children I wash up. With my husband asleep, I usually spend most of the afternoon repairing the toys my children have broken.

After the evening meal which I have prepared and laid on the table and my husband has woken up to eat, the whole family settle down to watch television and I have a relaxing drink.

Time for the children to go to bed, their little faces washed clean and flushed with excitement. I tuck the bedclothes around them and think all the hard work has been worthwhile and then return to watch the film on television I have been waiting all day to see.

I settle down with my husband and a drink in my hand, the film starts and I fall asleep.

ELSIE, H.Q.

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SPORTS SECTION

Rugby Round-Up

IN the first round of the Fire Service's National Cup Avon were drawn away to Hampshire and it was in early October the squad travelled to Portsmouth to play the game. Punctuality is not one of the greatest attributes of Brigade rugby players. The departure time of ten o'clock passed before breakfast was started and it was only after sufficient cheese on's and tea had been consumed that we set off from Temple to collect a second PCV from B6 and then to Bath for the remainder of the team. Despite two 'no shows' I was pleased to travel with 16 players, quite a feat in itself.

Tactics were discussed during the journey and it was decided that we would definitely stop for a Ginster's pasty. Having consumed same, we continued onward with Russell 'Advanced driver' Lee driving the lead PCV at which he termed as 'adequate progress' and not 'economy driving'.

And so to the match itself. We kicked off at 2.30 and it wasn't long before our pack had got to grips with the task in hand. A scrum on the opposition's five-yard line a few minutes into the game resulted in a pushover try for John Bessex at No. 8. A display of forward domination which set the tone for the rest of the game. In fact, until Martin Rundle went off with an injured leg after 20 minutes, we'd taken every scrum against the head. Dave Leeworthy came on at flanker and Sam Gane moved to prop to join Kev Escott and Dave Appleton in the front row. From here on constantly good rucking and mauling provided the backs with sufficient ball to make their mark on the game. Twice in the first half quick passing along the three-quarters had sent in left wing Russell Lee for tries in the corner. Andy Cunningham at centre, Craig Moore at fly-half and Tony Chapman on the other wing, all made good breaks and ran well with the ball. Our tackling was inconsistent at times but we did enough in our own 22 to keep the opposition out on all but one occasion. In the second half we soaked up some early pressure, then thanks to a solo run from his own half by Craig for one try and another try by Kev Escott, the game was safe. Craig also converted 5 out of 6 tries, three of which were superb touchline kicks. The game ended a convincing 34-4 win for Avon.

After the referee had been led back to his guide dog, we were made welcome at a nearby fire station with a plate of chilli. We would have had bread and butter too, but John Bessex ate it all. Most of the players took advantage of the station bar to quench their thirst. We did our best to celebrate the victory with a refreshment stop in Warminster on the way back but this proved to be about as exciting as an F.P. lecture, and aside from rendering what assistance we could at an RTA on the A36, we made haste back to Bath and then Bristol. A very satisfactory victory and a good day out. We look forward to playing at home in the next two rounds.

ADRIAN MANTLE, Rugby Organiser.

New players always welcome. Contact me at A1 Green or at home Bristol 665487.



PORTISHEAD PERAMBULATE



David, Neil and John before the start

PORTISHEAD firefighters always seem to find painful ways of raising money for the Benevolent Fund and near the end of May three of them walked to Fire Brigade Headquarters wearing full fire kit and breathing apparatus.

Firemen David Sullivan, Neil Brown and John Pain, started at nine o'clock amid a blaze of publicity and set a cracking pace. I must admit I did not think they could keep going at such a rate wearing their fireboots but when I caught up with them some six miles later, they were still going strongly and no blisters.

At Ashton Court there was a short break for refreshment and cylinder changes to their breathing apparatus and then off again detouring slightly through Broadmead shopping centre to collect extra money.

The effort was a great success, all three completed the walk, their breathing apparatus performed faultlessly and several hundred pounds raised for the Fire Services National Benevolent Fund.

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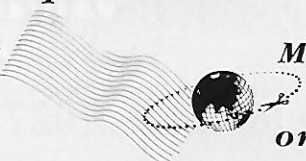
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